
Blighted Property Review Committee
Thursday, January 17, 2013
Determination Hearing
Meeting Report

Mr. Olsen called the Determination Hearing to order at 6:07 pm. He announced that a quorum was present. He also announced that Mr. Seidel resigned from the committee due to business commitments. He asked the Committee to assist in trying to find a new member. He suggested finding someone with building, trades or planning experience.

Mr. Olsen announced that the purpose of the hearing was to consider if the conditions of the properties on the agenda met any of the 12 conditions set by the Pennsylvania Urban Redevelopment Law of 1945, as amended and the City of Reading Blighted Property Review Committee Ordinance, and could be certified or determined as blighted.

BPRC Attendance: L. Olsen, R. Corcoran, W. Bealer, H. Urena, M. Wolfe, D. Lucky

Staff Attendance: L. Kelleher, T. Butler, Esq., M. Reinhart, B. Nicarry

Mr. Olsen asked Ms. Butler, attorney from the City's Law Department, to conduct the hearing. Ms. Butler explained the hearing procedures and summarized the blighted conditions as set forth in the City's Blighted Property ordinance. She stated that properties with owners present would be taken first and the remaining properties will be handled in a consent agenda fashion. All property owners were provided with a copy of the property packets that will be entered into the record.

DETERMINATION HEARING

Ms. Butler stated that the properties will be taken out of agenda order. The properties with owners or others willing to testify will be taken before properties not having representatives present.

1. 1422 Muhlenberg St, Marie Pierre, 1400 Hampden Blvd, Rdg, 19604, purchased Dec 2003

Ms. Butler asked Ms. Pierre to step forward. Ms. Kelleher administered the oath to Ms. Pierre. Ms. Butler entered the following conditions into the record from the property summary sheet as follows:

- Notice mailed to the property owner via first class and certified mail and posted on the property on December 13, 2012
- Delinquent water charges totaling \$1357.69; Water off Sept 2009
- Delinquent Taxes N/A
- Trades: Significant fire damage, open roof, missing windows
- Codes: Unpaid work orders for trash and securing property \$1244.25, unpaid QoL trash and weeds \$480
- Delinquent Trash and Recycling Charges N/A
- Liens of totaling \$364.68 for trash and recycling charges

Ms. Butler stated that this property is well known to the Property Maintenance Division due to its severe damage and its location in a very nice neighborhood. She stated that she learned from the bank that is foreclosing on the mortgage, that the property owner can make the necessary repairs after receiving permission from the bank.

Ms. Pierre stated that the fire occurred in September 2011; however, the fire insurance money was taken by the bank and she is unsure how to proceed. She expressed the belief that the foreclosure judgment removes owner responsibility.

Ms. Butler opened the public comment period and no one stepped forward to speak.

Ms. Wolfe moved, seconded by Mr. Bealer, to determine 1422 Muhlenberg as blighted. The motion was approved unanimously.

2. 211 Gerry St., Harvey, Mary and Kenneth Moyer, owners, 301 S Wyomissing Ave Shillington Pa 19607 no purchase date listed

Ms. Butler asked Mr. Moyer to step forward. Ms. Kelleher administered the oath to Mr. Moyer.

Ms. Butler entered the following conditions into the record from the property summary sheet as follows:

- Notice mailed to the property owner via first class and certified mail and posted on the property on December 13, 2012
- Delinquent water charges totaling \$3083.79; Water off before 2005
- Delinquent Taxes 2012 \$1288.20
- Trades: deteriorated roof, missing gutters and siding
- Codes: citation for failure to repair roof and gutters July 2012, not registered as vacant
- Delinquent Trash and Recycling Charges \$277.62

- Liens totaling \$1395.50 2008 Property Taxes

Mr. Moyer stated that he inherited the property from his father. He stated that the condition of 213 Gerry prevented the sale of this property and forced it into a declining condition. He stated that his wife has been laid off for two years which makes property repair difficult. He also noted his catastrophic injury two years prevented him from making property repairs. He stated that he was unaware that a property had to have water service. He stated that he recently obtained three roof estimates and expects to have the roof repaired quickly, if the weather cooperates. He stated that he plans to make property improvements and sell the property within 4-6 months.

Mr. Lucky stated that although the property will probably be determined as blighted the property can be removed from the list after the necessary repairs have been made.

Mr. Bealer noted that the next hearing is in 60 days and Mr. Moyer can provide an update then. He inquired if 213 Gerry was still a problem property. Mr. Moyer stated that the property was sold and is now in improved condition.

Mr. Olsen stated that he understands the situation and Mr. Moyer's efforts.

Public Comment

Ms. Butler opened the floor for public comment. No one stepped forward.

BPRC Vote

Mr. Urena moved, seconded by Mr. Corcoran, to approve the determination of 211 Gerry Street as a blighted property. The motion was approved unanimously.

3. 1538 Mineral Spring Rd, Mary Lou Petrucci owner, 1538 Mineral Spring Rd, Rdg, 19601 purchased June 2007

Ms. Butler asked Ms. Petrucci and Attorney Bagnado to step forward. Ms. Kelleher administered the oath to Ms. Petrucci and Mr. Bagnado.

Ms. Butler entered the following conditions into the record from the property summary sheet as follows:

- Notice mailed to the property owner via first class and certified mail and posted on the property on December 13, 2012
- Delinquent water charges totaling \$348.84; Water on
- Delinquent Taxes totaling \$6917.84 2009, 10, 11 and 12
- Trades: no exterior structural issues

- Codes: 8 citations for the condition of the stairs, porches and decks, 12 citations for the roof and spouting, 16 citations for peeling paint, 4 placards for unsanitary conditions, unpaid QoL and no show fees totaling \$2800
- Delinquent Trash and Recycling Charges \$1044.47
- Liens totaling \$15852.53 2008-09 Property Taxes, \$2249.96 Trash and Recycling, \$381.50 Municipal Lien

Ms. Butler stated that her experience with this property began in June 2012 when she prepared a search warrant necessitated by the owner's failure to allow an interior inspection. She stated that the search warrant was executed and the pictures are a good representation of the conditions inside this property. She stated that a multitude of animals were removed from the property by the Animal Rescue League due to lack of sanitary maintenance. She stated that there was urine and defecation throughout the property. She stated that the property owner was before the MDJ two times and charged criminally for mistreatment of animals and for the imprisonment of a man in the basement. She stated that the City has worked very hard to address the conditions at this property.

Mr. Bagnado stated that his client has been working very hard to clean the property and resolve the problems. He stated that the water and tax payment plan arrangements have been made as of today. He provided photographs of the improvements to the interior of the property. He expressed that other City properties are in worse condition. He asked the Committee to delay their decision until an interior inspection occurs. Ms. Petrucci stated that she intends to transfer the property title to her daughter for owner occupancy when the property is code compliant.

Ms. Butler reminded the attorney and the property owner that although payment plans were entered into, the property taxes are still four years delinquent.

Mr. Bagnado stated that his client has worked cooperatively with the City. Ms. Butler stated that the multiple placards and citations are proof that Ms. Petrucci has been far from cooperative. She described the extended period of time Ms. Petrucci was given to make repairs and she also described the constant change in attorneys representing Ms. Petrucci.

Mr. Bealer inquired if the vehicle has been removed. Ms. Petrucci stated that the vehicle is now registered and insured.

Ms. Wolfe asked Ms. Petrucci if she will allow an interior inspection. Ms. Petrucci stated that an inspection is scheduled for February 4th and that she will allow the

interior inspection. Mr. Bagnado stated that the City has told his client that she may not be inside the property. Ms. Butler stated that Ms. Petrucci was told that she cannot reside at the property but she can go there to make repairs.

Mr. Corcoran inquired if permits for the repairs were pulled. Mr. Bagnado stated that the permits were pulled and are posted on the front door.

Mr. Bealer stated that if the property is determined, Ms Petrucci will have 60 days before the next hearing when the property's conditions can be reconsidered.

Mr. Bagnado requested a delay in the decision. Mr. Lucky reminded the attorney that this process has two stages separated by 60 days, which provides the property owner time to remediate conditions.

Public Comment

Ms. Butler opened the floor for public comment. Gail Walsh stepped forward and Ms. Kelleher administered the oath.

Ms. Walsh stated that she resides at the adjoining property and has resided there for 15 years. She stated that the animal waste odors emanating from the property are horrible and that they are so pungent that they have overtaken her property. She stated that nothing removes the stench. She noted that the Animal Rescue League was back in December and removed more animals from the property. She stated that the photos may show improvements; however the improvements have not removed the animal waste odors. She stated that the smell is devastating. She noted that Ms. Petrucci was charged with similar acts in Montgomery County. She expressed the belief that Ms. Petrucci is not visiting the property but is residing there.

James Walsh stepped forward and Ms. Kelleher administered the oath.

Mr. Walsh stated that he too lives at the adjoining property and that the animal waste smell is overwhelming. He stated that this condition has existed for over two years. He stated that 28 animals were removed from the property in June and another dozen in December. He noted that repairs and cleaning will not resolve this odor problem. He requested that the Committee approve the determination of blight.

BPRC Vote

Mr. Corcoran moved, seconded by Mr. Urena, to approve the determination of 1538 Mineral Spring Road as a blighted property. The motion was approved unanimously.

4. 1012 Pear St., Raymond Jackovitz, owner, 3235 E Grant St, Slatington PA 18080, purchased Jan 2004

Ms. Butler asked Mr. Jackovitz to come forward. Ms. Kelleher administered the oath to Mr. Jackovitz.

Ms. Butler entered the following conditions into the record from the property summary sheet as follows:

- Notice mailed to the property owner via first class and certified mail and posted on the property on December 13, 2012
- Delinquent water charges totaling \$60.04; Water off Oct 2010 (meter change required)
- Delinquent Taxes N/A
- Trades: no exterior structural issues
- Codes: unpaid QOL weeds \$100, entered amnesty program
- Delinquent Trash and Recycling N/A
- Liens N/A

Mr. Jackovitz stated that he purchased the property in 2004 to rehab and flip with his grandfather and father. He described the repairs made. He stated that his grandfather died and his father moved and combined with the poor economy he was prevented from performing more work. He stated that the water charges have been recently paid and he is scheduling the replacement of the meter. He stated that he plans to continue repairs and sell the property.

Ms. Butler stated that lack of water service is the only issue with the property. Ms. Butler suggested that Mr. Jackovitz register the property as vacant for sale or vacant for rehab.

BPRC Vote

Ms. Wolfe moved, seconded by Mr. Urena, to approve the determination of 1012 Pear Street as a blighted property. The motion was approved unanimously.

Ms. Butler stated that if the water service has been restored at the March hearing the property can be removed from the process.

5. 430 Spring St, Edward Daniszewski, 20 Dautrich Rd Reading PA 19606, purchased Feb 2003

Ms. Butler asked Mr. Daniszewski to step forward. Ms. Kelleher administered the oath to Mr. Daniszewski.

Ms. Butler entered the following conditions into the record from the property summary sheet as follows:

- Notice mailed to the property owner via first class and certified mail and posted on the property on December 13, 2012
- Delinquent water charges totaling \$1477.32; Water on
- Delinquent Taxes N/A
- Trades: front porch roof rotting
- Codes: citation for failure to repair roof and gutters, unpaid QoL weeds and trash cans \$70
- Delinquent Recycling \$184.09
- Liens totaling \$348.62 Recycling

Mr. Daniszewski stated that the water delinquency reported is an error. He stated that the water is current. He stated that no one has ever resided at this property. He stated that he pulled a permit to repair the porch roof last week and that he replaced the rotting boards.

Mr. Nicarry stated that he saw the repair work when he performed the exterior inspection.

BPRC Vote

Mr. Lucky moved, seconded by Mr. Corcoran, to table the decision on 430 Spring Street until the March hearing. The motion was approved unanimously.

6. 702 N 10th St, Tony Tran, owner, 1803 Glenifer St, Phila, 196141, purchased Nov 2011

Ms. Butler stated that the property owner is not present. Mr. Johnson Tran, the property manager, will comment during the Public Comment period.

Ms. Butler entered the following conditions into the record from the property summary sheet as follows:

- Notice mailed to the property owner via first class and certified mail and posted on the property on December 13, 2012
- Delinquent water charges totaling \$112; Water off Feb 2012
- Delinquent Taxes N/A
- Trades: windows missing, exposed to the elements, substantial fire damage in

the rear

- Codes: work order to secure property \$296.56, unpaid housing permits and no show fees \$350
- Delinquent Trash and Recycling N/A
- Liens N/A

Public Comment

Ms. Kelleher administered the oath to Mr. Johnson Tran. Mr. Tran stated the fire occurred in early 2012 or late 2011. He stated that he applied for a roof permit three weeks ago but the permit has not yet been issued. He stated that the owner plans to rehab the property and reside there. He stated that work on the property is planned for this spring.

Ms. Butler suggested that the property be registered as vacant for rehab.

Ms. Butler stated that the owner of 526 Douglass stepped out of the room and she suggested addressing the consent agenda properties in the meantime.

Consent Agenda

Ms. Butler inquired if any one representing the following properties is present and inquired if anyone in the audience would like to provide comment on the following properties.

- 211 Greenwich St, Eric John Wells, owner, 211 Greenwich St, Reading PA 19601, purchased Aug 2000
- 1252 Perkiomen Ave., Eastern Development Property Trust, owners, 701 S Broad St Philadelphia Pa 19147, no purchase date listed
- 1340 N 10th St., Richard and Bertha Hafer, 1005 Beech St Reading Pa 19605, No purchase date listed
- 915 N Front St, Robert and Sandra Clark, owner, 915 N Front St, Reading 19601, No purchase date listed
- 618 Birch St, Neil McClean, owner, 2038 Salisbury Dr Apt A Bowling Green KY 42101, purchased Aug 1998
- 1453 Fairview St, Mark French, owner, 317 Warwick Dr Reading Pa 19610, purchased March 1998
- 922 Perry St, Orlando Matos, 922 Perry, Rdg, 19604 purchased Feb 2002
- 517 Perry St, Elizabeth Polk, 4412 Bloomfield Ave # F-1 Drexel Hill Pa 19026, purchased Jan 2006
- 522 Heine St, Chia-Chang Liu, 3437 Bartlett Ave Rosemead CA 91770, purchased April 2007

- 641 S 10th St, John Dorscheimer, owner, 641 S 10th Street Reading PA 19601, No purchase date listed
- 741 N 2nd St, Nicholas Batista and Lillian Brown, 741 N 2nd St Reading PA 19601, purchased July 2004

No one stepped forward.

Ms. Butler stated that these properties meet the bight criteria. In summary:

- All notices posted and mailed 12/13/12
- 618 Birch St: Water delinquency \$1496.21 and off 4/2010, 2012 Taxes delinquent \$419.11, Trades – needs new roof covering, Codes – QoL \$260, Delinquent Recycling \$184.09, Liens 2011 Recycling \$348.65
- 211 Greenwich St: Water delinquent \$112 and off 12-08; Trades - 1st floor porch rotting, prolonged neglect, Codes – NOV failure to repair porch roof, windows, siding, gutters, no firewall, unpaid QoL weeds \$300
- 1252 Perkiomen Ave: Water delinquent \$112 and off 7-09, Delinquent taxes 2011-12 (exonerated at Free and Clear tax sale), Codes – QoL \$2915 trash, weeds, furniture and trash cans, unpaid work orders \$691.62, Delinquent trash and recycling \$1934.43, Liens – RAWA \$3120.77, 2011 Property Taxes \$2040.39
- 1340 N 10th St: Water delinquent \$144.75 and off 7-12, Delinquent 2012 taxes \$296.43, Trades – poor repair, insulation falling from roof, Codes – NOV secure property, QoL unregistered vehicle
- 915 N Front St: Water delinquent \$3018.59 and off 12-10, Front porch roof rotting, broken concrete steps, Citation Jan 2013 failure to repair roof and downspout, Unpaid work orders \$696.05, QoL \$1005, Delinquent Recycling \$565.55, Liens 2007 Taxes \$968.59, 2004-07, 08, 09, 10 Recycling \$1212.67, \$596.80 Nuisance abatement
- 1453 Fairview St: Water delinquent \$8189.32 and off 5-07, Delinquent Taxes 2012 \$461.99, QoL \$320, Delinquent Recycling \$90.56, Liens \$9410.38 RAWA
- 922 Perry St: Water delinquent \$1659.27 and off 9-12, Codes – citation handrails, peeling paint, sidewalk repair, QoL \$820, Delinquent Recycling \$465.56, Liens Recycling and Trash 2002-2009 \$1581.29
- 517 Perry St: Water delinquent \$2439.65 and off 1-11, Trades – front porch deteriorating, Codes – citation failure to repair porch, unpaid housing permits, work orders QoL \$1009.38
- 522 Heine St: Water delinquent \$622.46 and off 7-12, Delinquent Taxes 2012 \$655.92. Codes – unpaid work orders \$148.63 and QoL \$710 – Foreclosure Customers Bank
- 641 S 10th – Water delinquent \$968.54 and off 12-11, Delinquent taxes 2008, 09, 10, 11, 12 \$3004.98, Trades – front porch rotted, bowed roof, threat of collapse, Codes

- Unpaid work orders \$1181.95 and QoL \$1870, Delinquent Trash and Recycling \$1128.43, Liens 2008, 09, 10 taxes \$1995.13, Trash and Recycling 2008, 09, 10 \$2132.07
- 741 N 2nd: Water delinquent \$2567.75 and off 9-12, Delinquent taxes 2009, 11 and 12 \$2327.47, Trades – fence collapsing and front steps rotting, Unpaid work orders \$699.38, QoL \$1865, Liens Taxes 2009, 10, 11 \$2091.36, Trash and Recycling 2005-09 \$1325.88

Public Comment

Raymond Kadingo stepped forward to comment regarding 618 Birch Street. Ms. Kelleher administered the oath.

Mr. Kadingo stated that he is pleased that the Committee is processing this property. He stated that he owns a rental property attached to this property and that the deteriorated condition of this property is causing damage to his property. He stated that this property is falling apart and he thanked the response of the Property Maintenance Division to his complaint about this property. He also expressed the belief that the property has an infestation problem that is also damaging his rental property.

Ms. Wolfe moved, seconded by Mr. Urena, to approve the determination the Consent Agenda properties as blighted properties. The motion was approved unanimously.

- **526 Douglass St, Edner Casimir, owner, 181 Hawthorne St Apt 4F Brooklyn NY 11225, Purchased July 2008**

Ms. Butler asked Mr. Casimir to step forward. Mr. Casimir and his son James stepped forward and Ms. Kelleher administered the oath.

Ms. Butler entered the following conditions into the record from the property summary sheet as follows:

- Notice mailed to the property owner via first class and certified mail and posted on the property on December 13, 2012
- Delinquent water charges totaling \$1450.98; Water off 6-10
- Delinquent Taxes 2009, 10, 11 \$2327.47
- Trades: no exterior structural issues
- Codes: Unpaid work order weeds \$75.31, QoL weeds \$225
- Delinquent Recycling and Trash \$473.61
- Liens totaling \$575.59 recycling 2009,10

James Casimir stated that his father has been dealing with brain cancer since 2010 and

that he recently learned that his father owned this property. He stated that he has tried to maintain the property since he learned that his father owned it. He stated that he plans to restore the water service and rent the property out next month.

Mr. Corcoran reminded Mr. Casimir to bring the Recycling payments current. He asked Mr. Casimir to contact the Customer Service Center.

BPRC Vote

Mr. Bealer moved, seconded by Mr. Corcoran, to determine 526 Douglass Street as blighted. The motion was approved unanimously.

Mr. Lucky moved, seconded by Mr. Urena to adjourn the meeting.